



US 20020056390A1

(19) United States

(12) Patent Application Publication

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(10) Pub. No.: US 2002/0056390 A1

(43) Pub. Date: May 16, 2002

(54) DIRECT-TO-PLATE LITHOGRAPHIC PRINTING METHOD USING AUTOMATIC PLATE-COATING AND CLEANING

(30) Foreign Application Priority Data

Nov. 14, 2000 (EP) 00203968.3

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Publication Classification

(51) Int. Cl. 7 B41C 1/10

(52) U.S. Cl. 101/463.1; 101/478

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(57) ABSTRACT

A direct-to-plate method of lithographic printing is disclosed wherein a printing press is used that is coupled to a coating apparatus and to a cleaning apparatus; wherein the coating apparatus applies an image-recording layer on a substrate so as to obtain a printing plate, which is mechanically transferred to the printing press; and wherein, after the print job, the printing plate is mechanically transferred to the cleaning apparatus wherein the substrate is recycled, so that the recycled substrated can be reused in a next cycle of coating, printing and cleaning. The off-press coating and the off-press cleaning step provide a fully automated printing method wherein the press down-time is minimized. The method comprises also an off-press or an on-press exposure step.

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(21) Appl. No.: 10/007,911

(22) Filed: Nov. 8, 2001

Related U.S. Application Data

(63) Non-provisional of provisional application No. 60/252,540, filed on Nov. 22, 2000.

